

Recently the Madison County Health Department requested that they be allowed to place traps in several locations around Highland to trap mosquitoes to test for the West Nile virus. As with several other locations in Madison County, the mosquitoes tested from Highland tested positive for the virus.

WHAT WE DO -

As we have done all summer, the Street and Alley Department will continue spraying operations throughout the city. The entire city will be sprayed over a two night period every other week. The other week will be used to concentrate spraying operations in the public parks.

Spraying only kills mosquitoes that come in contact with the insecticide droplets and the fog soon dissipates. Fogging does not prevent mosquitoes from re-entering the area so the population is reduced for only a few days. The most effective method of mosquito control is larviciding or the treatment of locations where mosquito larvae are present. The City also uses this method.

WHAT YOU CAN DO -

Reducing the number of mosquitoes around homes and neighborhoods requires homeowners assistance in finding and eliminating breeding sites - standing water. Adults of some mosquito species remain near their breeding site. Others can travel long distances, even up to several miles. Because of this, problem mosquitoes may come from breeding sites some distance away.

Regardless of recent weather patterns - wet, dry, warm, or cool - there are plenty of potential places in which mosquitoes can develop and will continue to breed until evening temperatures are consistently cooler than 60 degrees. A neglected birdbath, swimming pool, or clogged rain gutter can produce hundreds of new mosquitoes in a just a few days. Large areas of standing water, sluggishly moving streams or ditches may require extra effort.

If you live in a neighborhood where property maintenance issues may be creating mosquito breeding grounds, please contact Building and Zoning at 654-7115 to file a nuisance complaint. As per the City Ordinance, Nuisance Sec. 30-27 –

All stagnant water in which mosquitoes can multiply and all items containing stagnant water, which can serve as a breeding ground for mosquitoes. This includes, but is not limited to, bottles, cans, buckets, swimming pools, clogged gutters or any other places containing stagnant water. The outdoor storage of tires for more than seven consecutive days shall also be included in this section. However, the foregoing declarations of public nuisances shall not apply to ditches, drainage ways, detention basins, lakes, streams and natural land formations where water may collect.

Staying indoors at dusk and during evening hours will lessen the chance of being bitten. Long-sleeved shirts and pants will provide protection when outdoors but bites can still occur through thin clothing and to exposed skin.

Topically applied mosquito repellents will help to prevent bites when spending time outdoors. The most effective mosquito repellents contain the active ingredient diethyl toluamide (DEET). The higher the percentage of DEET in the product, the longer the protection lasts. Low percentage formulations are available for use with young children.

Please take necessary measures to protect you and your family from the virus.